

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3316

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 2915

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, CVIS, CPAS, RO

SUBJ: TRADE BILL: CONVERSATION WITH CHIEF RABBI ROSEN

REF: BUCHAREST 2868

1. AMBASSADOR AND DCM MET WITH CHIEF RABBI ROSEN JUNE 28 PRIOR HIS DEPARTURE JUNE 29 FOR GENEVA. IT WAS AGREED HE WOULD CONTINUE ENCOURAGE RABBI MILLER TO VISIT ROMANIA. HIS OWN PREFERENCE IS FOR RIGHT AFTER THE GENEVA MEETINGS, BUT HE IS AGREEABLE TO RABBI MILLER'S IDEA OF LATE JULY OR EARLY AUGUST. ALSO AGREED THAT THE NEED FOR A TRIP BY HIM TO THE U.S. HINGED ON RESULTS OF THE GENEVA MEETING, GOR PERFORMANCE DURING JULY, AND THE OUTCOME OF A POSSIBLE VISIT HERE BY RABBI MILLER. IN ANY CASE, RABBI ROSEN HAS NO FIRM PLANS AT THE MOMENT FOR A VISIT AND WOULD CONSULT WITH US BEFORE MAKING ANY.

2. SINCE OUR LAST CONVERSATION STATISTICS HAVE STARTED TO COME IN ON NUMBER OF PERSONS STILL DESIRING TO EMIGRATE (SEE PARA 2 REFTEL). PROVISIONAL FIGURES APPEAR TO BEAR OUT RABBI'S EARLIER STATEMENTS THAT POOL OF PERSONS WISHING TO EMIGRATE AT THIS TIME IS RELATIVELY SMALL. BUCHAREST JEWISH COMMUNITY REPORTS 300 PLUS. (HE SHOWED US A COPY OF THE LIST.) RABBI ROSEN THOUGHT PROMVYCES MIGHT REPORT O ANOTHER 300-400 WITH FIRM FIGURES BEING IN WITHIN THE WEEK. HE DOES NOT ANTICIPATE A TOTAL FIGURE MUCH HIGHER FOR NOW
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THAN 700-800 PERSONS, INCLUDING NEW APPLICANTS.;Q HE SAID

DOICARU HAD TOLD HIM AFTER PRELIMINARY SCRUTINY OF PROVISIONAL LIST FROM BUCHAREST REGION THAT PROBABLY ALL BUT 20-30 WOULD RECEIVE APPROVAL FOR EMIGRATION.

3. RABBI REPORTED HE HAD HELD CONVERSATIONS WITH BOTH DOICARU AND MACOVESCU IN PAST COUPLE OF DAYS. HE HAD URGED BOTH TO HASTEN PACE OF BUREAUCRACY CONNECTED WITH DEPARTURE

FORMALITIES ONCE APPROVAL WAS RECEIVED. SALE OF HOUSES AND APARTMENTS IN INSTANCES WHERE GOVERNMENT ENTITIES HOLD MORTGAGES APPEARS TO BE ONE OF THE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCKS. RULES AND REGULATIONS ARE UNCLEAR AND IN MANY CASES SUBSTANTIAL SUMS OF MONEY HAVE TO BE RAISED HASTILY. ON JUNE 27 HE SAID HE RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM DOICARU THAT THESE AND OTHER FORMALITIES ARE BEING GREATLY SIMPLIFIED SO AS TO EXPEDITE DEPARTURES.

4. RABBI PROVIDED US WITH FOLLOWING STATISTICS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION WHICH HE SAID HE HAD JUST RECEIVED FROM A "HIGH SOURCE" (ASSUME HE WAS REFERRING TO DOICARU).

A. FROM PERIOD 1 JAN 1970 - 25 JUNE 1975, 20,973 PERSONS APPLIED; 20,745 WERE APPROVED; 296 WERE DISAPPROVED; 18,248 INDIVIDUALS DEPARTED ROMANIA.

B. FROM PERIOD 1 JAN 1975 - 25 JUNE 1975, 1,435 PERSONS APPLIED; 1,811 WERE APPROVED; 168 WERE DISAPPROVED; 542 INDIVIDUALS DEPARTED ROMANIA.

C. HE NOTED THAT ON JUNE 26 AN ADDITIONAL 50 PERSONS WERE APPROVED.

D. FROM JUNE 1-25, 261 PERSONS DEPARTED ROMANIA.

E. AS OF JUNE 28 TAROM HAS ALLOCATED 303 SEATS FOR DEPARTING EMIGRANTS TO ISRAEL FOR MONTH OF JULY.

5. STATISTICAL CONFUSION ABOVE (I.E. 1,435 APPLICANTS FOR PERIOD 1 JAN - 25 JUNE; 1,811 APPROVED) IS EXPLAINED BY CARRYOVERS FROM EARLIER PERIODS. RABBI WAS TOLD BY MACOVESCU
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THAT A MAJOR SOURCE OF STATISTICAL CONFUSION DIFFERS IN FIGURES ADVANCED BY JEWISH AND ROMANIANS HAD BEEN FOR FAILURE TO KEEP ACCURATE ACCOUNTING ON NUMBER OF PERSONS ORIGINALLY DENIED APPROVAL AND LATER GIVEN APPROVAL. THUS 11,000 FIGURE CITED BY ISRAELIS AS HAVING BEEN PROVIDED BY FOR UNINTENTIONALLY INCLUDED, ACCORDING TO MACOVESCU, NUMEROUS CASES THAT HAD ONCE BEEN REFUSED BUT SUBSEQUENTLY RESOLVED FAVORABLY.

6. COMMENT. RABBI ROSEN DEPARTS FOR GENEVA CONFIDENT OF HIS POSITION AND HOPEFUL OF HIS ABILITY TO PERSUADE AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERSHIP (ESPECIALLY RABBI MILLER) OF FACTS OF CURRENT SITUATION. THERE IS INCIDENTALLY EVIDENCE OF SOME STRAIN IN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THESE TWO PERSONALITIES. RABBI ROSEN SEEMS ESPECIALLY UPSET THAT RABBI MILLER THUS FAR HAS DEALT ONLY WITH ISRAELI LEADERSHIP ON QUESTIONS WHICH HE IS CONVINCED ARE FUNDAMENTALLY HIS RESPONSIBILITY. BUT AT SAME TIME HE RECOGNIZES OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE OF AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS' SUPPORT FOR TRADE AGREEMENT AND WE ARE CONVINCED THEY WILDO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO WIN SUCH SUPPORT. AS WE WERE LEAVING HIS APARTMENT HE RETURNED TO HIS SOLEMN THEME THAT FAILURE OF TRADE AGREEMENT IN CONGRESS WOULD MEAN DARK DAYS AHEAD FOR REMAINING JEWS IN ROMANIA. BARNES

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